/Pages i-iv are title pages./

/v/ Foreword

101 114 I wrote this book in collaboration with the tribes of the western Haut-Atlas /High Atlas/, and particularly the Seksawa. Nothing is more fierce, better preserved than these sons of the 824 black schist. The dizzy slope that goes up to one of their high places, the Tichka, bears an isolated tree that they call tasghart [856] wawal, something like "the tree of speech." They administer • 122 its leaves in an infusion to children slow to speak. I have spent a good deal of time myself in unraveling the language of the Seksawa.

123 124 Abandoning the doubtful method of the "informant" and of questionnaires, I would let the problems and the facts come to me. A year passed before I reached the level of the accounts composed, around 1925, at Imintanout by Lieutenant de La Chapelle. I collected the best of my provender almost by chance, by means of visits in the mountains, long talks on the roads, judicial debates, festivals, evenings. Thus friendships and knowledge deepened simultaneously.

I had the joy of sharing the one as well as the other with many visitors. They will recognize themselves here. Perhaps they will conjure up, in reading such and such a page, that brief and shining hour, the irreplaceable bit of life that momentarily united us in the history of the Atlas.

128 This book, therefore, was written in communication. Although it does not claim the authority of any of those who have read it in manuscript, by pieces or in its totality, it has greatly benefited from their remarks. All were valuable to it. But I could not say whether it has always profited from them as much as it should have. I can therefore neither hierarchize the gratitude nor have understood by it that I am acting on the authority of such and such of the masters who have expressly wished to advise me. The imperfections of my work will be alone, alas, to face the too-just criticism. I do, however, acknowledge my debt to MM. G. Davy, L. Gernet, R. Montagne, /vi/ J. Célérier,

/vi cont./

128 J. Dresch, F. Braudel, L. Milliot, H. Terrasse, E. Lévi-Provençal, J. Despois, E. Laoust, J. Orieux, G. H. Bousquet, A. Adam. The Institut des Hautes Études marocaines /Institute of Moroccan Advanced-Studies/ has given me most substantial aid. M. L. [122] Galand checked the Berbère /Berber/ writing, lessons in which, by M. A. Basset, had given me a presentiment as to its exacting niceties. I am indebted to Lucie Berque for her drawings, to M. Leloup for his cartography, to M. J. Van den Hove for his careful proofreading. To all, thanks. And thanks to all my collaborators from Imintanout, great and small, French and Moroccan, who participated in the research or in working it up. Many names crowd under my pen here, names which I cannot mention for lack of space and which I must leave in the anonymity of friendship.

123 Most of all, it is to the Seksawa that my gratitude goes. Mixing in their life for several years, I advanced slowly into their acquaintance, and perhaps into their confidence. Of course, I have not been to the end of the one or the other. In order to go further, it would have required a still longer stay and, to speak truthfully, a definitive naturalization, similar to that which, in the course of the centuries, brought so many distant sons to the little people of Lalla Aziza.

000 All was rightly so. As great as its ambitions were, analysis stops before intimacies which it could not infringe upon and which will be revealed only when they can be, when they need to be, if there is still time for it. The future in the Atlas, as elsewhere, will perhaps make the silent speak. We shall leave to it the task of completing our research, if it is worth the trouble, on the day when the Seksawa have tasted of the tree of speech.

Cairo, October 1, 1954.

/xii cont./

121 that struck his mind, death of holy personages, passage of the
[127] Sultan's armies, struggles of villages or cantons.

So it is by direct inquiry, made in the country, that one
114 must ask what the texts deny us. It is therefore necessary to
123 try, in the course of long visits in the villages of the Atlas, to
•[122] adopt the existence of the Berbères /Berbers/ for a time by a kind of voluntary mimicry; by speaking their language, one will even try to take on their habits of thought, in order to lessen the distance that separates us from their primitive civilization and to get to observe it better.

Moreover, this method of investigation does not proceed without serious difficulties; it imposes, perhaps still more than the use of documents, a rigorous discipline.

Indeed, one cannot ask the Berbères /Berbers/ -- even when we have gained their confidence at the cost of some effort -- to initiate us into all that we do not know about them; it does not occur to them that we may not know what is most obvious to them and most strange to us; this is how it happened that we spent several months in the western Haut-Atlas /High Atlas/ studying the life of the tribes without discovering the existence of the "leffs," that organization of permanent alliances without which, however, it is impossible to understand the transformation that has taken place in the country in the past fifty years; only the chance occurrence of a historical inquiry made with the oldest old men of a village abruptly revealed to us their nature and essential role. Rather /xiii/ than by confidences, it is thus by an attentive observation of the present, by meticulous research on the events of the past -- such as the oldest witnesses can enable us to know -- that one will come to understand the nature of the institutions and to discern the working of the laws that dominate the politics of the tribes.

121 On the other hand, each of the cantons in which the inhabitants of the Moroccan South voluntarily enclose their activity has its own life; particularly in the mountains, the horizon of the political life of these small republics is strictly limited; it will

121 /xiv/ guests, high in the towers of the casbahs, or still oftener
114 in the humbler homes of the village sheiks, that we tried to uncover the various aspects of the simple life of the montagnards of the Moroccan South. While, before our eyes, the sometimes attractive, always engaging pictures of the primitive and harsh existence in the high valleys were helping us to understand the present, the old men were telling us about the wars of the past, the traditions formerly respected, now destined for oblivion, because they had become forever useless in a new order. These invaluable recitals by hundreds of witnesses evoked half a century of history for us in the country itself, amidst ruins of villages or on the towers of fortresses, with a certainty and a lifelike precision of details that gave us the illusion of the present. Little by little such obscure struggles were illuminated for us, and in the course of the harsh stages of the Atlas roads it happened at times, in the stern grandeur of the summits and passes, that we encompassed in a single glance a vast horizon of valleys where we practiced discerning with our guides, as in a wide-open book, the hidden meaning of Berbère /Berber/ life.

▸122 Having reached the end of our labor, it remains for us to express our feelings of deep thanks and respectful gratitude to those who permitted us to undertake it and to finish it; it would not have seen the light of day without the confidence with which Marshal Lyautey honored us by keeping us in Morocco and giving us the necessary means for carrying on our investigations. The honor of having been thus associated in a small way with his work will remain for us the most precious memory of our African career.

The support, so kind and wise, of Colonel Huot, directeur des Affaires indigènes /Director of Native Affairs/, greatly facilitated our beginnings.

/xiv cont./

•122 Mr. Steeg, résident général of France in Morocco, kindly gave us the same trust, and it is thanks to his intervention and the interest that he took in our research, with the late Mr. Duclos, directeur des Affaires indigènes, that we were able to finish the necessary investigations.

General Daugan and General Huré, commanding the region of Marrakech, gave us in every circumstance the kindest help in carrying out our missions.

Without risking omissions, we could not here call off the names /xv/ of all the officers of the Direction des Affaires indigènes who facilitated our labors in the regions of Marrakech, Fez, and Taza, and in their commands reserved for us the most confident and cordial welcome. May they be willing to believe in our feelings of deep and friendly gratitude. We must at least mention here the very constant support and very valuable encouragement that were given us by our late friend Captain H. Thraen, of the service des Affaires indigènes, who died on duty at Marrakech in 1927, as well as the useful information collected with Commandant Bourguignon, killed by the enemy at Kechachda in 1927. Our friend H. Basset, the late director of the Institut des Hautes-Études marocaines /Institute of Moroccan Advanced-Studies/, had kindly interested himself in our work in 1924 and guided our first research with his advice.

12 We must particularly show our gratitude to our friends: Captain Pennès -- who so often gave us the valuable contribution of his knowledge and courage in the course of aerial missions and the geographical study of the dissident regions -- Lieutenant F. de La Chapelle, to whom we owe such useful studies on the country of the Seksawa (Book III, Ch. II and III), on which we have so largely drawn here; Lieutenant Spillman, Captain Interpreter Ben Daoud, from whom we